

**REPORT/RECOMMENDATION TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
OF SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA
AND RECORD OF ACTION**

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February 3, 2004

FROM: ED KIECZYKOWSKI, County Librarian
Library

SUBJECT: GRANT APPLICATION TO FIRST 5 COMMISSION

RECOMMENDATION: Approve application to the San Bernardino County First 5 Commission for funding in the amount of \$129,396 to finance the "Learn-it Program" at the Newton T. Bass Apple Valley Branch Library.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: County Library, through funding from the San Bernardino County First 5 Commission, has developed a Learning, Information, Technology and Education (LITE) Center at the Apple Valley Branch Library. This LITE Center provides developmentally appropriate programming, books, toys, audiovisual aids and other materials for children (prenatal to age 5), as well as materials related to prenatal care, parenting, and adult literacy. The Center also offers training in using computers and online resources for adult family members. The goal of the LITE Center is to facilitate the growth of young children and increase family functioning through parent education.

On August 26, 2003, the Board accepted a California State Library grant in the amount of \$35,040 to expand the scope of the LITE Center at the Apple Valley library by providing the "LITE Place for Special Needs Families" program. This program is aimed at improving the services for special needs children and their caretakers. The funds were used to purchase materials (books, videos, CDs) on topics related to visual/hearing/speech/language impairment, autism, learning/developmental disabilities, at risk and medically fragile children. This program was developed in cooperation with San Bernardino County Schools' Early Start Program/Early Childhood Assessment Team and the Apple Valley Unified School District.

Recently, County Library was notified that First 5 Commission funds were available for a proposed "Learn It" program at the Apple Valley library. This funding would be used to expand the "LITE Place for Special Needs Families" program by providing specialized assistive technologies such as Intellitools, adaptive software, headphones, speakers and hand-held computers. The "Learn It" program would also provide a site for parents to meet with other parents and community professionals, and receive information about health and social services agencies, literacy opportunities, child development and how to advocate for their children's education.

Participants in this program would receive kits that contain library resources and service information, a parenting book, children's books dealing with diversity, and a hand-held computer. To extend the program beyond the immediate Apple Valley community, the LITE mobile unit would be equipped with an Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) equipped

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computer. Partners in the cooperative effort would include the San Bernardino County School's Early Start Program/Early Childhood Assessment Team and the Apple Valley Unified School District. Projected outcomes of this program include acquisition by special needs children (ages 0-5) of social skills necessary to become successful in a school environment, and the development of parents in becoming advocates for their children's education. County Schools will provide initial and final participant evaluation formats.

County Library learned of this grant opportunity in mid-December, 2003. Staff was able to complete the application for submittal to the First 5 Commission by their January 16, 2004 deadline. However, the limited amount of time staff had to complete the application, in addition to the holiday schedule, precluded County Library from acquiring Board approval prior to submittal. At this time, County Library requests that the Board formally approve this application for compliance with County policy.

If this grant application is successful, County Library will return to the Board for approval to accept these funds in accordance with County Policy.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL BY OTHERS: This item was reviewed by County Counsel (Deputy County Counsel Dawn Stafford) on January 26, 2004, and by the County Administrative Office (Tom Forster, Administrative Analyst) on January 22, 2004.

FINANCIAL IMPACT: If this application is ultimately approved by the First 5 Commission, and the grant is accepted by the Board, grant funds in the amount of \$129,396 would be received by County Library for use in expanding existing literacy and school readiness programs at the Newton T. Bass Apple Valley Branch Library to improve accessibility and programming for special needs families. Of the \$129,396 being requested, \$68,346 would be used to fund 1 part-time Library Associate and 3 part-time Library Assistants. The remaining \$61,050 would be used for materials and handheld computers/software. There is no local match component required for this grant.

SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT(S): 1st.

PRESENTER: Ed Kieczkowski, 387-5721.